

2009 A YEAR OF CHANGE?

As a young boy growing up in rural Gwinnett County, Georgia in the early 1960s, I never imagined that a black man could become President of the United States.



I vaguely remember when schools in Gwinnett County were segregated; by the time I was in the 4th grade, around 1965, schools were integrated, although we only had one black family that lived in Lilburn at the time.

I also remember, somewhat vaguely, talk around my house of a man named Martin Luther King; I didn't really understand what he was trying to accomplish, although in my house he was understood as a threat to our "way of life", and a mention of him always brought forth a lot of profanity. Unfortunately, I also remember, and with great remorse now, actually feeling some joy in learning of MLK's death. As I became an adult and learned the truth about what MLK was all about, my attitudes about him changed. I do not know how anyone growing up in the South in those times could not be affected in some way by the recent election, and I also do not know how anyone could NOT understand the true significance of Barack Obama's election as President.

I taped the "I Have a Dream Speech" aired on CNN last Monday, and watched that speech with my family. It was actually the first time I had heard the speech in its entirety. What a moving and inspirational speech! In particular, MLK's insistence on using non violence to achieve freedom from oppressive government action was awesome.

President Obama has called for a change in the way Washington does business, in the way the U.S. treats its world neighbors, and in how each American must take personal responsibility for their lives. I hope, for our country's sake, that he succeeds.

If our Forefathers looked at the direction this country has taken just since 9/11, they would be rolling in their graves. Can you imagine Washington, Adams, or Jefferson putting up with being stopped on their horses by local militia road checks? Yet as we enter 2009, our police departments, with support from the Courts, are as aggressive as ever in stopping citizens who are simply lawfully traveling our roads. The US Supreme Court, while finding roadblocks unconstitutional in general, have said that "roadblocks run for DUI enforcement are legal." As Justice Thomas stated in his dissent in *Indianapolis v. Edmund*, a 2000 roadblock case, "I rather doubt that the Framers of the 4th Amendment would have considered "reasonable" a program of indiscriminate stops of individuals not suspected of wrongdoing."

Do you think Jefferson, Franklin, et al, would stand for the US Supreme Court's decision last week (a 5-4 decision with

George W. Bush's 2 appointees in the majority) ruled that evidence seized by the police illegally can nonetheless be used to convict someone if the police maintain they seized

the evidence "illegally"? So much for the 4th Amendment, which I thought protected us from inappropriate police searches and seizures.

How about the Government being able to legally monitor ANY international phone call or email without a warrant, regardless of who might be communicating or why? And I thought I had to worry about China monitoring my calls to my daughter living in Shanghai!

I recently learned that some local police departments randomly check license plates to see if "possibly" the car is owned by "possibly" someone who "possibly" has a suspended license. Can you imagine driving down the road, minding your own business, committing NO traffic violations, and having a cop with nothing better to do than intrude into your privacy? I can only imagine what Andrew Jackson would have done to such a local constable! (Either challenged him to a duel or flogged him!)

The time has come for change in America. For far too long, the government has slowly and consistently whittled away at our RIGHT TO BE LEFT ALONE. Let's take back our Constitutional rights staring today.

2009 PINK IN THE RINK WEEKEND

The Gwinnett Gladiators, partnering with The Sport of Giving, Inc. will host the 2nd annual PINK IN THE RINK weekend, February 14, 7:05 p.m., and February 15, 4:05 p.m. at the Gwinnett Arena. The Glads are dedicating these two games for raising funds for cancer awareness and the Gladiators Foundation for Kids.



The tickets are \$15.00 each, and may be purchased by going to:

<http://gwinnetgladiators.com/tickets/offers/sogpitr1>

CHANGING FEAR TO GRATITUDE

Last year was a very depressing year, at least in terms of our economy. If you are like me, and your investments went into the toilet, and you have a fear or uncertainty about the future, try this thought process: Compare your life with those in most of the world. Most of the world's population live without retirement accounts, health insurance, Medicaid, Medicare, more than one car (if any car at all), and most either live in one room houses or apartments. Even if we have lost some of our possessions, most of us still have much more than millions of other people in the world. Let's be grateful what for we have, and let us move forward confident that while we may not have what we want, we have what we need!



Don't forget to check out my blog!
defendingdriversrights.com

DRIVING WHILE TALKING ON A CELLPHONE IN GEORGIA —

CELLPHONE LIMITS HEADED OUR WAY



It appears that the Georgia legislature will finally pass some type of law, banning or limiting use of cell phones while driving, at least for teen drivers. According to NHSTA (National Highway Safety Traffic Administration), cell phone use has now become one of the major causes of accidents. I even understand that many teen drivers are actually texting while driving!

I say, don't limit the law to teens! Some states already ban hand held phone use while driving. I do not think cell phone use with Bluetooth devices are banned. Although I think enforcement would be difficult, I would be in favor of laws banning hand held phones while driving. The reason? As NHSTA states "Driving is a complex task involving a number of subtasks, many of which occur simultaneously.

These include: steering, controlling the accelerator, signaling, controlling the break pedal, operating a clutch, operating a gearshift, observing other traffic, observing signal lights, stop signs or other traffic control devices, and making decisions.

Driving a car may not be as complicated as flying an airplane, but it's close. Can you imagine a pilot trying to land a plane while talking or texting on a cell phone?

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